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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography on nongraded schools concentrates on the most recent books, periodicals and other publications. Thirty references are grouped under the headings theoretical, research, and practical. (KM)

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THE NONGRADED SCHOOL

An Annotated Bibliography

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of nongraded schools is old and new at the same time. To get the latest thinking on the subject, I concentrated on the most recent references. I did include significant books and a few earlier research studies with interesting results.

My readings about the nongraded school organization kept reminding me of Seymour Sarason's book on the problem of change in the schools. Surely, a truly nongraded school will require many alterations in traditional school structure.

THEORETICAL

BOOKS:

Brown, Frank B. The Appropriate Placement School: A Sophisticated Nongraded Curriculum. West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Co., 1965.

The author presents a new curriculum model he has developed for nongraded schools. He refers to his program as "multiphased education" and adapts it for primary, intermediate, junior high, and senior high school levels. He presents the importance of changes in the library. He devotes a chapter to how the nongraded curriculum can help prevent dropouts. Another chapter tells how he feels the nongraded program can help the disadvantaged child from kindergarten on up. Dr. Jerome Bruner wrote the Introduction in which he describes the Melbourne experiment in multiphased education. The book included Tables, and has an Index. The Appendix includes "A Parent's Blueprint," which gives a parent's viewpoint on the nongraded school.

Goodlad, John I., and Anderson, Robert H. The Nongraded Elementary School. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Revised edition, 1963.

Considered a "milestone book" in presenting the background, development, and theoretical bases for nongraded schools. The authors give the best coverage of the subject from theories of curriculum to reporting pupil progress, from setting up realistic standards to the effects of the program on mental health, from the establishment of nongraded schools to the possible future of this program. There are helpful tables on factors which are important to consider in establishing nongraded schools. Very readable sourcebook for the nongraded school. Good for basic understandings. Comprehensive bibliography for readings published before 1963, divided by headings: Individual Differences and Pupil Grouping; Reporting Pupil Progress to Parents; Nongraded School Organization. Index.

Miller, Richard I., and others. The Nongraded School: Analysis and Study. New York: Harper and Row, 1967.

This very useful book combines theoretical and practical, as well as giving research findings in the Appendix. It analyzes the nongraded school and offers useful strategies for implementing such a program. The new innovations are evaluated. Chapters are written by different "experts" in the field. Chapter 6 has commentaries by 11 educators, giving their individual experiences with nongradedness. Chapter 3 describes the Detroit Nongraded Program. The valuable Appendix contains a detailed NEA Research Report on nongraded programs in elementary and secondary schools. Appendix C gives Procedures and Guidelines for Initiation of An Ungraded Primary Unit, including Administrative Considerations. There are sample forms to use with parents and teachers. Appendix D presents research findings on nongraded programs in the state of Washington.

THEORETICAL

PERIODICALS AND OTHERS:

Casavis, J. N. "Non-gradedness: A Formula for Change," New York State Education, 57: 22-3, December 1969.

The author traces the evolution of nongraded instruction from its origins in colonial times to its contemporary status as a formula for change. In early days it was a method born of necessity. Today, it is a necessity born of our awareness of the differing needs and abilities of children. Describes non-gradedness as an approach to working with students so that each child may develop at his own pace and on his own level. Learning is taught in a sequential manner. "Failure" is viewed as a problem of adjustment and placement. Teacher enthusiasm and involvement are essential for a successful program.

Ferrante, R. F. "Alternative of Nongradedness," Instructor, 80:158-9, August 1970.

Nongradedness is discussed as an alternative plan of school organization. It is both an idea and a goal. The author feels that an administrator cannot implement the plan without a true curriculum change. The essence of the non-graded program is the availability of different levels of material to meet the changing needs of the student as he develops. Ferrente identifies stumbling blocks to nongraded programs as teacher dissatisifaction, deficiency of curriculum materials, and possible parental dissatisfaction. Stresses the need for good public relations.

Goodlad, John I. "The Nongraded School," National Elementary Principal, 50:24-9, September 1970.

This comprehensive article on the soundness of nongraded programs is a brief to be entered in support of the Lansing, Michigan School District, in a lawsuit regarding nongraded schools. Parents suing the District claim that the nongraded program negatively affected the education and mental health of their son, because of a transfer from a "third grade" class to a class of primarily second graders. Goodlad explains how the nongraded system is a response to the knowledge of individual differences among human beings. He gives its background from the 1860's. He explains how the use of graded textbooks has led to unfortunate and unsatisfactory attempts at adjustment. He gives the basic assumptions and research findings which underlie non-graded schools. Common features are schoolwide nongrading, content and materials chosen in light of children's interests, and groups based on continuous diagnosis of children, rather than on age. Goodlad feels that there are few well-developed nongraded schools. Most are experimental. Attempts to measure effects are inconclusive. Change has been painfully slow.

Gottardi, L. "Instructional Media Center Services in the Nongraded Elementary School," Audio-Visual Instruction, 16:30,3, April 1971.

Describes in detail the new concept of the library in a nongraded school, as a comprehensive Instructional Media Center. The librarian will function as a master teacher, a materials specialist, and a media programming engineer. The author feels the librarian should work with the teacher to clarify objectives and evaluate materials for each study unit. A flexible

library schedule should provide media center facilities as needed. The librarian should present an overview of the materials available to students and teachers, and demonstrate their use to both groups. There should be a bibliography of materials on the varying ability levels. Helpful article.

Lieberts, M. L. "Case for Nongraded Schools," Catholic School Journal, 70:38-40, March 1970.

Excellent comparison of graded versus nongraded school with good review of research. Gives historical background of both programs. Feels nonpromotion is detrimental to the personal and social adjustment of the slow learner. States the case for the nongraded continuous progress program which enables to learner "to acquire a wholesome feeling of success." Believes in Anderson's findings of superior adjustment and achievement for children at every level in a New Jersey study. The author feels nongraded schools provide a democratic social climate. Teaching in nongraded schools requires more of a teacher, but it is professionally more satisfying.

Models for Nongrading Schools: A Report of a National Seminar. Dayton, Ohio: Institute for the Development of Educational Activities, 1970.

A group of theoreticians and practitioners examine the present status of the nongraded school in the United States. They establish guidelines for teachers and administrators who want information on how nongrading and continuous progress works, giving practical as well as theoretical advice. They stress the importance of defining the goals of a nongraded school. They present a conceptual model of the nongraded school.

Watson, C. M., and others. "Continuous Progress: An Idea, a Method, an Organization," Contempory Education, 42:247-50, April 1971.

The article defines and discusses the important ingredients of a valid continuous progress program: success based on progress in learning; programs, methods, and materials of instruction designed to reward progress in learning at the child's pace; general objectives that permit all children to attain them at some respectable level; defined steps in learning; continuous evaluation by teacher and child to determine progress and needs. The author also describes non-gradedness as a method and as an organization.

RESEARCH

MONOGRAPH:

Otto, Henry J., and others. Nongradedness: An Elementary School Evaluation. Austin, Texas: University of Texas at Austin, 1969.

The research reported here was conducted at the Casis Elementary School, which is affiliated with the University of Texas at Austin as a special center for research and demonstration in elementary education. The study included typical and special education children. The comprehensive study covered all areas, including the distribution of the teacher's instructional time, the scope of instructional resources used, sub-groups, children's school anxiety, children's achievement, and use of the library. The findings supported by numerous tables were so mixed that no clearcut conclusions could be drawn regarding the value of nongradedness as compared to a graded program. One surprising result was that anxiety seemed to increase over the school year in the nongraded classes. Otto concluded that how teachers teach and how they work with children is more important than any single feature of organization. He also felt that a nongraded program cannot be mandated; it must have teacher insights and dedication to the program. In addition, for a nongraded program to succeed, the internal organization of the school must be altered. Bibliography in front of the book is good for sources before 1969, and included historical sources from 1881. A very readable and significant study.

PERIODICALS AND OTHERS:

Brody, E. B. "Achievement of First-and Second-year Pupils in Graded and Nongraded Classrooms," Elementary School Journal, 70:391-4, April 1970.

Subjects in this study were 362 boys and girls in the first and second years of two nongraded public elementary schools in Pennsylvania. The central group consisted of 241 girls and boys in the first and second grades of a graded school in the same school system. Achievement was measured by the Stanford Achievement Test and the California Test of Mental Maturity. Several tables are given, including one on IQ. The results generally showed that pupils in nongraded schools usually, but not invariably, perform better on standarized tests.

Brown, Edward K. The Nongraded Program at the Powell Elementary School: Evaluative Phase II. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Philadelphia School District, April 1970.

This research evaluated the nongraded program at Powell School, (Grades 1-6). The results indicated that individualization of instruction did occur. Pupil performance in reading and arithmetic was significantly improved over the previous year. Students also gained in independent study skills over the majority of students in graded schools. The evaluation includes recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the nongraded instructional program.

Carbone, Robert F. "A Comparison of Graded and Nongraded Elementary Schools," Elementary School Journal, 62:82-88, November 1961.

An important early study made to seek more evidence on the effect of nongraded structure on achievement and mental health. Another purpose was to investigate the relation between the nongraded program and the instructional practices of

teachers. Carbone used two schools identified as nongraded by Goodlad and Anderson in their survey. He compared them to two school systems of similar economic level which were graded. Results showed that graded pupils scored significantly higher than nongraded in all areas of achievement. In most mental health factors, there were no significant differences. In social participation, the graded pupils scored significantly higher. The instrutional practices of teachers in graded and nongraded schools showed no sharp differences.

Johnson, G. R. "An Investigation of the Classroom Related Activities in a Selected Number of Nongraded Elementary School Classrooms." Dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1968.

Twelve nongraded classrooms were studied to analyze classroom activities in Grades 4-6 from the pupil's perception, the observer's perception, and the teacher's perception. Johnson tried to determine the extent of individualized instruction and the climate of the classroom. Results established no relationship between the extent of individualized instruction and the patterns of time allocations, nor between the extent of individualized instruction and the classroom climate. The amount of individualized instruction varied considerably among the twelve nongraded classrooms, indicating that labels do not always influence classroom activities.

McLoughlin, W. P. "Continuous Pupil Progress in the Nongraded School: Hope or Hoax?" Elementary School Journal, 71:90-6, November 1970.

This article presents the findings of a study of 8 school districts, 17 elementary schools, hundreds of teachers, and thousands of pupils, cooperating with New York State Education Department and St. John's University. Careful analysis found that graded and nongraded schools are similar in providing pupil progress. In nongraded schools, however, a consistently higher percent of the children progressed normally through the primary grades. Acceleration in the primary grades is so infrequent that it is almost non-existent in both graded and nongraded programs.

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Moore, Daniel I. "Pupil Achievement and Grouping Practices in Graded and Ungraded Primary Schools." Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1963.

This is an experimental study of a variety of factors relating to the achievement of first and second year pupils in graded and ungraded programs in the Wayne Community School District during the 1961-62 school year. A total of 12 teachers and 329 students were in a graded plan, and 12 teachers and 292 students in an ungraded plan. Moore found that graded students were higher in achievement. In the one year studied, flexibility was not unique to the ungraded program. Moore felt his study suggested that pupil variability can be as adequately met in graded plans as in ungraded plans.

Morris, V. R., and others. "Pupil Achievement in a Non-graded Primary Plan after Three and Five Years of Instruction." Educational Leadership, 28:621-5, March 1971.

In this Pennsylvania study, one type of graded program was compared with a type

of nongraded primary plan, as measured by pupil achievement. Comparisons were made following the experimental period (Grades 1-3) and again at the end of the post-experimental period (Grades 4-5). Conclusions after Stage I: The nongraded method was significantly better in achievement than the graded method. There was no significant difference between the sexes. Within the nongraded, girls significantly excelled boys. Within the graded method, girls excelled boys but not significantly. After Stage II, nongraded achievement was higher than graded. Boys were significantly better than girls. The interaction of methods and sex was significant. Nongraded was better for both boys and girls. Within the nongraded, boys were slightly better than girls. Within the graded, boys were significantly better than girls. Morris suggests that future studies be made with high IQ boys and girls.

National Education Association, "Nongraded School Organization," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, 43:93-95, October 1965.

A postal card inquiry was sent in the spring of 1964 to all 441 school systems with enrollments of 12,000 or more. Out of 353 replies, 114 reported nongrading was being practiced in one or more elementary schools. Schools with the largest enrollments had the largest percent of schools with a nongraded sequence. The primary grades (K-3 or 1-3) were the grades most frequently replaced by a non-graded sequence. About 1/3 of the 114 schools with nongrading had it in 6 or more schools. Only a limited number of junior and senior high schools were adopting nongrading on an experimental basis. Tables are given. There is a good discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of nongraded schools.

Saunders, B. T. "Emotional Disturbance and Social Position Within the Non-graded Classroom," Psychology in the Schools, 7:269-71, July 1970.

Studies of self-contained classrooms have indicated that children who are emotionally disturbed are also socially rejected. This research study was made to see whether there was a similar relation between emotional disturbance and social position within the nongraded classroom. The study used 333 students from Grades 3-6 in social studies classes in a Connecticut nongraded elementary school. The research used the Behavior Rating of Pupils followed in one week by the Ohio Social Acceptance Scale, correlated by Spearman Rho. The results indicated that other non-delineated variables operate in a nongraded classroom than studies have shown in a self-contained classroom. In this sample, the relationship reported for self-contained classrooms between social status and emotional disturbance was not evident in 7 of the 12 classes studied. Saunders calls for more research in this field.

PRACTICAL

BOOKS:

Dufay, Frank R. Upgrading the Elementary School. West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Co., 1966.

Tells how Parkway School of Long Island, New York, put nongradedness into practice. The book goes into details of planning, specifics of organization, grouping, reporting of pupil progress, staff utilizations, community involvement, and other related areas. There is a frank discussion of its successes and failures. Dufay gives valuable recommendations for initiating nongradedness. He included samples of letters for parents and faculty, as well as forms and questionnaires. Appendixes. Index.

Glogau, Lillian, and Fessel, Murray. The Nongraded Primary School: A Case Study. West Nyack, New York: Parker Publishing Co., 1967.

This case study of a successful nongraded program provides a handbook to apply to any nongraded program. It tells how teachers, administrators, and parents moved from recognition of the need for change to action. The book clearly describes the steps necessary in the transition of a program. It relates what happened the first year a nongraded organization plan was introduced into Old Bethpage School, Plainview, Long Island. There are good recommendations for administrators so that they might know the possible pitfalls and avoid them. This school used Primary Meetings as a supervisory technique. Insights are given into teacher planning for individuals and groups, curricular implementation, and selection of materials and activities. There are good chapters on internal and external problems. The Appendix includes: Scope and Sequence Charts for Social Studies, Levels of Reading Skills, Individual Practices and Independent Activities, Report Cards, etc. Index. Very complete and helpful.

PERIODICALS AND OTHERS:

Avon's Nongraded Elementary and Middle School Reading Program. Conneticut: Avon Public Schools, 1968.

Gives the evolution, structure, and implementation of a nongraded reading program in Avon. The program was organized on 23 sequential learning levels. Report provides lists of specific suggested texts, supplementary materials, and tests for evaluation. It also includes readiness checklists, informal reading inventories, and sample report cards. There is also a helpful description of parent-teacher conferences.

Barnickle, D. W., and Lindberg, R. T. "Team Approach Is Essential in a Nongraded School," Illinois Education, 58:385-6, May 1970.

Authors discuss the nongraded Elmwood Elementary School in Naperville (K-5) in which reading, spelling, and math materials are arranged in sequential skills and individual children progress at their own rate. The school uses clusters of students in a wide range, and allows for flexible movement between groups as needs change. The teacher role is one of shared responsibility for the welfare of a total, fluid student population. The goals of their total education program are better initial teaching, high teacher morale, growth of ideas, improved materials and techniques, gains to all curriculum areas, climate for professional growth. A helpful article.

"Flexible School: Meadow Moor School," Instructor, 79:36-8, January 1970.

In 3 years (1967-1970) on an ordinary school budget, Meadow Moor Elementary School in a Salt Lake City suburb went from a traditionally organized school to a "nongraded, continuous-progress, flexibly staffed showplace." Describes how this was accomplished. They have two major instructional categories: Primary for children 5 to 9; Upper for children 8 to 12. Placement and grouping are done on a sliding scale of behavior and achievement. Their major educational goal is for the children to become "literate, a specific state achieved by children at different rates in different ways." They also aim to develop independence tempered by responsibility. The article describes their media center, media corporation, and specialty classes. Illustrated.

Friek, Paul. "Telluride Nongraded Elementary School." Denver, Colorado: Colorado State Department of Education, 1963.

The author tells how this Colorado school gradually converted to a nongraded school program. The nongraded subjects, reading and arithmetic, were set up for individualized instruction. Promotion and retention were eliminated. At the end of two years, this program was evaluated as successfully established. The Appendix contains a comparison of the main features of graded versus nongraded schools. It also outlines its individualized reading and arithmetic programs. In addition, there are sample report cards and some methods of evaluating achievement.

Irwin, M. D. "Modeled from Industry, This School Is Anything But a Factory," American School Board Journal, 157:8-9, June 1970.

The Janesville, Wisconsin Board of Education revamped a 1929 building to house its now, nongraded school. Management techniques were borrowed to implement their nongraded concept. They started in 1965 by discussing the plan with the Wisconsin Reading and Development Center. The program involves 100 students. Concrete information is given on their nongraded structure, staff utilization, and individualized goals. A management and planning council meets twice a week to discuss the program. The council includes the principal, teachers, and Reading and Development Consultants.

Sister Rita. "Upgrading the Primary School," Catholic School Journal, 69:23-7, May 1969.

Tells how an urban parochial school in the Bronx, N. Y., with 90% Puerto Rican, 8% Negro, and 2% white students changed to a nongraded structure, starting in 1967. It describes how they reorganized and trained teachers. They reached their goal to ungrade completely by September, 1968. Reading was a prime need. They relate how needs for different levels of reading were met in the primary, intermediate, and upper grades. The article names the materials and books that were used. They developed literature and language arts programs, science plans, and a study center. They took field trips under Title I. The author recounts their successes and shortcomings. The nongraded program resulted in improvement for all grade areas. Good article.

3 on 2 Program: Administrative Guide and Implementation Handbook. (Revised Edition) Honolulu, Hawaii: Hawaii State Department of Education, August 1970.

This program was based on the concepts of individualized instruction through the team approach to teaching. A team of 3 professionally equal teachers taught a group the size of two classes, which was a combination of grade levels, such as K-1, 1-2, or 2-3. Ungraded activities were designed to help the student acquire basic academics, develop self-direction, and a realistic, positive self-concept. They also encouraged the establishment of satisfying, interpersonal relationships. The program covered all subject areas. There are administrative guidelines and suggestions for implementation regarding curriculum in the nongraded system, with emphasis on the primary. Tables provide classroom arrangements, sample schedules, etc. There is supplementary information on individualized instruction and the concept of continuous individual pupil progress. Good help.

Watson, C. "Learning and Liking It: Lincoln School, Staples, Minnesota," American Education, 6:18-22, May 1970.

Nongraded Lincoln School in Minnesota opened as a model school in 1967, offering individualized instruction from kindergarten. Instruction is not only individualized, but personalized, taking into account the learning style and learning experiences each child will enjoy. The degree of structure in each child's program depends upon his maturity. Responsibility is developed. Children have warm relationships with the teachers. The school uses multimedia and has a 2,000 volume library. They were helped by a federal grant. Children are on different fluid levels of learning. School-parent-community relations are excellent. Visitors come to see this model school. Illustrated.